THEC

Letter of Notification (LON)
Policy A1.0 New Academic Programs: Approval Process

Institution: Middle Tennessee State University

Proposed Academic Program: Occupational Innovation and Effectiveness, Master of Science (MS)

Proposed Implementation Date: May 12, 2025

CIP Code and Title: 30.9999

CIP Code Definition: Multi-/Interdisciplinary Studies, Other

Any instructional program in multi/interdisciplinary studies not listed above.

LON Submission Date: April 15, 2024

Posted Date on THEC Website: April 16, 2024

Public Comment Period: April 16-May 1, 2024

Letter of Notification Checklist

THEC Academic Policy 1.0 (Section 1.0.6A) Letter of Notification Requirements:

- ✓ Letter of Support from the President/Chancellor signifying institutional governing board or system office support for development;
- ✓ Program overview;
- ✓ Background information;
- ✓ Feasibility Study;
- ✓ Enrollment and graduation projections;
- ✓ Projected costs to deliver the proposed program;
- ✓ Projected revenues for the proposed program;
- ✓ Letters of support.

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

LETTER OF NOTIFICATION (LON)

M.S. Occupational Innovation and Effectiveness

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Office of the President
Middle Tennessee State University
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MIDDLE TENNESSEE
STATE UNIVERSITY

April 15, 2024

Steven Gentile, PhD
Executive Director
TN Higher Education Commission
312 Rosa L. Parks Ave, 9th Floor
Nashville, TN 37243

Dear Dr. Gentile:

In accordance with Tennessee Higher Education Commission Policy A 1.0, Section 1.0.5A, this letter signifies my support for the development of the **M.S. in Occupational Innovation and Effectiveness** at Middle Tennessee State University. Our Board of Trustees has already approved the program as a "Degree Under Consideration."

The Board and I believe that the addition of the 30-credit hour, online degree program will enhance MTSU's portfolio and strengthen the University's ability to provide high-level skills to the workforce of the Middle Tennessee region and beyond. The graduate program, which allows students to stack three focus blocks, will be housed in the College of University Studies.

We appreciate THEC staff's consideration of this Letter of Notification and look forward to continued collaboration with your office.

Sincerely,

Sidney A. McPhee
President

CC: Dr. Julie Roberts, THEC Chief Academic Officer
        Dr. Mark Byrnes, MTSU Provost

Section I: Overview

Program information

Institution Name:	Middle Tennessee State University
Proposed Academic Program Name:	Occupational Innovation and Effectiveness
Concentration(s):	None
Degree Designation:	Master of Science
Proposed CIP Code:	30.9999.00
CIP Code Title:	Multi-/Interdisciplinary Studies, Other
CIP Code Definition:	Any instructional program in multi/interdisciplinary studies not listed above.

Academic Program Liaison:

Dr. Amy Aldridge Sanford
Vice Provost for Academic Programs
Office: 615-494-7611
Email: amy.aldridge.sanford@mtsu.edu

Proposed Implementation Date:

May 12, 2025

Section II: Background

Background Concerning Academic Program Development

As a regional institution, MTSU seeks to provide community members with graduate-level educational opportunities to advance their employment and support the training needed by Tennessee's employers. The M.S. in Occupational Innovation and Effectiveness (MSOIE) is a stackable credentialing[1] Master's degree which will allow for flexibility in the skills obtained by each individual student.

Unlike many micro-credentialing models in universities across the nation, this program culminates in a Master's degree made up of Focus Blocks with true, graduate-level courses. Thus, this degree results in higher-level skills and significance that will be valuable for both graduates and their employers. The delivery model provides flexibility to students while allowing for better coordination of curriculum with industry needs[2]. The program will be offered online.

Purpose and Nature of Academic Program

The MSOIE is a 30-hour, online graduate program. It is composed of three, nine-hour Focus Blocks centered on a particular skill or topic (i.e., Human Skills, Digital Building Blocks, Business Enablers) and will be created by faculty across campus to be aligned with professional development needs in business, industry, and education in Tennessee. Students will have choices as to which Focus Blocks they take to

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[1] https://eab.com/insights/blogs/adult-learner/stackable-credentials-graduate-programs/
[2] https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/ccte/cte/cte_certs_guidance.pdf

make up their M.S. degree, making this program flexible for the needs of the employees and employers. Upon completion of each Focus Block, a student will receive a digital badge and physical medal themed to the subject matter they have mastered. After completing three Focus Blocks (27 hours), students will enroll in a capstone course (three hours) which will help them to bring their newly obtained knowledge together in a résumé, portfolio including reflection, an elevator speech, and other final products.

The purpose of the proposed degree program is to provide needed high-level skills to the Tennessee workforce. The intended students will be professionals with bachelor's degrees who seek advancement or awareness and mastery of specific skills and knowledge in a high-paced business, industrial, or educational environment. This program will provide more advanced instruction than standard professional development opportunities and will lead to a Master's degree, using a stackable credentialing model. Students will be able to demonstrate mastery of three content areas, be able to effectively communicate the nature and merits of their newly acquired skills and transfer them to the workplace environment.

Alignment with State Master Plan and Institutional Mission

The MSOIE adds a graduate-level layer to the State Master Plan (SMP)[3]. The SMP and the Drive to 55[4] focus on undergraduate education as it pertains to the workforce. Regarding adult learners, the SMP (p. 31) notes the importance of aligning learned skills with workforce needs and leveraging available resources to do so. In the section on credentialling (p. 37) #2 states *Stakeholders' thinking about educational supply and occupational demand should increasingly be informed by larger "catchment areas" of related skills, academic and training programs, and occupations that require or utilize those skills.*

The proposed MSOIE utilizes the depth of MTSU faculty knowledge to create a flexible and highly adaptable program aimed at providing working adults with add-on skills needed for success and promotion in a highly dynamic workforce environment. Focus Blocks can be centered upon specific skills such as workplace data or leadership and ethics while using an interdisciplinary approach aimed at significantly increasing skill level in a short, efficient timeframe. The structure of this program allows for market-sensitive redesign of focus blocks as well as the addition of courses/blocks in high demand and the elimination of focus blocks no longer needed. In this way, this innovative program can take input from students and employers and adapt to the workforce needs of TN communities. The online format also allows for accessibility to professionals in the Middle Tennessee region and beyond.

The 2020 update to the SMP discusses New Foundational Skills of the Digital Economy[5] (p. 35). Focus blocks centered on Human Skills, Digital Building Blocks, and Business Enablers will allow students to home in on the skills they and their employers need as technology and business practices change with AI and other innovations. This program serves to implement stackable credentials (SMP 2020, p. 36) as building blocks toward a graduate degree. While some students may complete all Focus Blocks sequentially and earn a degree in 5 semesters, others may take blocks as needed over several years to concentrate on specific sets of skills as needed in their job.

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[3] https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/thec/bureau/research/other-research/master-plan/MasterPlan2025_0418.pdf
[4] https://driveto55.org/
[5] https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/thec/bureau/research/other-research/master-plan/finalmp.pdf

The MTSU mission states that the university *embraces its role as a comprehensive, innovative institution whose distinctive bachelor's, Master's, specialist, and doctoral programs prepare graduates to thrive in their chosen profession and a changing global society*[6]. The program proposed here is an innovative Master's program meant to enhance professionals' skills as the needs of the Tennessee workforce change. The use of emerging technologies and the knowledge of how to utilize and adapt to them will be an important part of this program as it relates to the institution's purpose in serving the regional community. The program, being online, will enhance access to this unique program to serve a diverse student population.

The MSOIE will also meet aspects of the strategic paths for the MTSU Quest 2025 plan[7]. For Strategic Path III-*Establish MTSU as an educational, cultural, and economic hub to support student success and lifelong learning*, this program will be a part of *Establishing an educational hub for business and corporate partnerships in the Nashville/Davidson County SMSA* to support student learning an increase access to career development and career advancement through its innovative means of connecting the MTSU faculty's expertise with skills and knowledge needed in industry, business, and education.

For MTSU's Academic Master Plan (AMP), Strategic Direction 3, *Innovate for effectiveness and efficiency*, this program relates to *Partnering with business, industry, and non-profit organizations to respond to their unique educational needs and the economic development of the region*. This program will match the strengths of our faculty to the needs of the workforce to contribute to the continued skill development of employees in the region. The flexibility of the program will allow for quick turnaround of new focus blocks enabling the director of the program to receive input from business and industry and efficiently develop focus blocks to address skill and knowledge needs represented by faculty across the campus.

Institutional Capacity to Deliver the Proposed Academic Program

The M.S. in Occupational Innovation and Effectiveness will allow for efficient use of faculty resources with those departments which participate. Focus Blocks can be housed across the university, and many will be interdisciplinary. For this reason, capacity of faculty can be spread across the institution without negatively impacting the workload requirements of any one department or program. Adjuncts with deep workplace experience will also contribute to focus blocks when appropriate. The target population for this program is professionals requiring advanced skills/knowledge in particular areas or addressing specific problems. These students will obtain a multidisciplinary approach to real workplace challenges. They will be students who would not seek other graduate-level opportunities and would not result in a loss of enrollment in other programs.

Existing Program Offered at Public and Private Tennessee Institutions

This is an innovative program that does not have parallels in Tennessee. There are many universities that advertise stackable certificates, but these only allow credits toward an existing Master's degree. Baldwin Wallace offers an MBA program[8] that allows for 2-3 stackable certificates within the program, but it does not have the flexibility, adaptability, and multidisciplinary characteristics of the program

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[6] https://www.mtsu.edu/about/mission.php
[7] https://www.mtsu.edu/quest/
[8] https://www.bw.edu/schools/business/graduate-professional/certificate-programs/stackable-certificates/
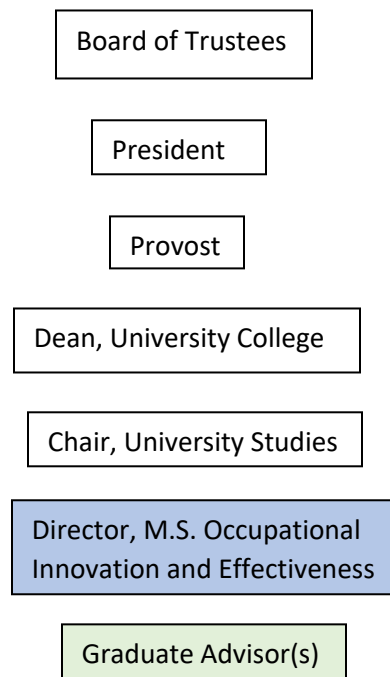
proposed here. MTSU is not aware of any other program that works the way that is envisioned in this proposal. Thus, this program is on the cutting edge of Higher Education[9].

Accreditation

There is no accreditation for this program.

Administrative Structure

This program will be housed in the University Studies Department of the University College. The program will require a new director (Year 1). As the program grows, program advisors will be needed (years based on student enrollment). Once the program reaches 40 students and is trending toward increased growth, then a program advisor will be needed. It is possible that further advisors will be needed after Year 5. This structure is based on that in our existing MBA program.

Board of Trustees

President

Provost

Dean, University College

Chair, University Studies

Director, M.S. Occupational Innovation and Effectiveness

Graduate Advisor(s)

Another important part of creating and maintaining the relevancy of this program will be an advisory group made up of local business and education leaders and faculty, who can talk through and recommend needed focus blocks.

Section III: Feasibility Study

MTSU contracted with Hanover to conduct a feasibility study (See Appendix A). The M.S. in Occupational Innovation and Effectiveness is an innovative program without parallel in the United States. Because of this, it is difficult to perform a traditional feasibility study. The Hanover study emphasizes business

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[9] https://eab.com/insights/blogs/adult-learner/stackable-credentials-graduate-programs/?gclid=CjwKCAjwgsqoBhBNEiwAwe5w0wcgQIWCf2tC-eZR12eTijv-H5YdMQw3Fbgpr8jbwQbkIeSY1W1mHRoCsYsQAvD_BwE

programs because that is where higher education shows the greatest use of stackable credentials within Master's programs to date. Even in these areas, these programs are rare.

Student Interest

The Hanover Study suggests that the MSOIE would be of interest to students. The 30-hour online degree does seem to be appropriate for the targeted student population. A review of degree and certificate completion trends shows strong student demand for organizational leadership, management science, and marketing across geographic levels. This indicates these would be viable Focus Blocks. The study also confirmed that the proposed online delivery mode is the most desirable to students.

Local and Regional Demand

A review of the competitive landscape reveals very few programs with the same structure as the M.S. in Occupational Innovation and Effectiveness. Hanover did not identify any existing master's programs composed of a capstone and three non-certificate stackable focus blocks that emphasize on specific business skills. However, stackable master's programs that include the completion of two to three graduate certificates as a part of the degree are more common.

Employer Demand

Recent studies have noted that employers are interested in their employees gaining skills through micro credentialling, but that they have difficulty in assessing the quality of those credentials[10]. Through the THEC program approval process as well as SACSCOC procedures, this program would have recognizable quality that employers could trust and use to access employee development.

The study also gives hard and soft skill directions for the focus blocks based on job postings. From programming in JavaScript and SQL to communication and problem-solving skills, MTSU is well-suited to provide focus blocks that are relevant and in high demand by employers in the Middle Tennessee region and beyond.

Community and Industry Partnerships

The response from local and regional companies and organizations regarding the proposed degree has been quite positive. The Focus Block model will allow this program to be nimble in responding to community and industry needs. Program leadership will keep a pulse on those needs through an advisory council comprised of

Appendix A contains letters of support from two of the largest economic development agencies in Middle Tennessee: the Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce and the Greater Nashville Technology Council. Together, these organizations represent hundreds of area companies and will provide access to business leaders willing to serve on the advisory board.

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[10] https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2023/03/03/microcredentials-confuse-employers-colleges-and-learners

Section IV: Enrollment and Graduation Projections

Table 1 – Projected Enrollments and Graduates

Year	Academic Year	Projected Total Fall Enrollment	Projected Attrition	Projected Graduates
		Projected Enrollments and Graduates		
1	2025-26	30 new (30 total)	3	0
2	2026-27	17 new (44 total)	4	8
3	2027-28	21 new (53 total)	5	12
4	2028-29	26 new (62 total)	6	14
5	2029-30	31 new (73 total)	7	16

To project enrollment and graduation rates, data were pulled from the initial years of MTSU's M.S. in Professional Science and M.P.S. in Professional Studies, as these two programs are the closest in nature to the proposed M.S. in OIE. Attrition was estimated at approximately 10% of a given year's enrollment.

Note that this program will have students who participate for a semester or year, and then come back in later semesters to continue their degree. Being set up into focus blocks, students can stop out and come back into the program seamlessly, especially if they complete one focus block at a time.

Section V: Projected Costs to Deliver the Proposed Program

Projected One-Time Expenditures

Faculty & Instructional Staff
None.

Non-Instructional Staff
None.

Graduate Assistants
None.

Accreditation
None.

Consultants
As part of the THEC approval process, the program will require an external reviewer in the planning year, with a one-time cost estimated at $4,000, which includes a $1,500 stipend and travel costs.

Equipment
One computer will be needed for the director in the planning phase of the program and another will need to be provided for the program advisor in the 3rd year, for a total cost of $4,000.

Information Technology
None.

Library Resources
None.

Marketing

None.

Facilities

None.

Travel

None.

Other

None.

Projected Recurring Expenses

Faculty and Instructional Staff

This program will not require the hiring of additional full-time faculty; however, adjuncts from community businesses and schools will be added to support focus blocks to provide workplace application. (Y1 = $2,600; Y2 = $5,200; Y3 = $7,800; Y4 = $10,500; Y5 = $10,500)

The director of this program will receive a 6-hour course release and a summer stipend of $6,000 as an annual cost. This person will begin in the summer prior to the start of the program.

Non-Instructional Staff

Advisors will be added as the program grows. The first advisor will be hired when the program reaches 50 students, which is estimated to occur in Year 3. The estimated cost of the advisor's salary and benefits is $72,436, which includes a base salary of approximately $52,300 with an additional $20,136 (38.5%) factored in to cover benefits.

Graduate Assistants

There will be no GAs for this program.

Accreditation

None.

Consultants

None.

Equipment

None.

Information Technology

None.

Library Resources

Current library holding are sufficient for this program.

Marketing

The program will require $3,600 (an average of $300/month) during the planning year to invest in marketing materials (e.g., print collateral, brochures, swag), as well as social media advertising to create awareness of the program and encourage applications. In Year 1, marketing costs will increase to $6,000

to invest in additional digital advertising designed to increase awareness and enrollment. After the initial push in Year 1, the program will continue to advertise, but at an investment of $3,000 per year. In Year 5, marketing costs will increase slightly to cover the costs of additional promotional placements to highlight and showcase any fifth anniversary announcements and/or events, etc.

Facilities

Two offices will be needed for this program by the end of year 5 (one in Year 1). These will be provided by University College in existing space at no cost to the program.

Travel

The director and (later) program advisor(s) will need $2,000/year to attend job fairs and other events for recruiting purposes.

Other Resources

When a student completes a focus block, they will receive a digital badge and a physical coin. The first five years will include building up the focus blocks and the associated completion recognitions since this is a degree made up of truly stackable credentials.

Digital Badge Creation and Set-up: Years 1 and 2: 6 badges @$2,000 ($12,000 total)/year); years 3-5: 3 badges ($6,000/year)

Medal design, production, and supply maintenance: Years 1-2: 6 medals ($4,600 total/year); years 3-5 ($3,300 total/year)

Section VI: Projected Revenues for the Proposed Program

Tuition

Creating this program is a step forward in higher education in providing high-quality stackable program that leads to an identifiable credential at the end. This program would also be financially viable in a way that other university micro credentialing models are not. Finally, students would be investing into a degree with financial and time resources, making this program more appealing than cheaper, lower quality options.

Tuition projections below have been calculated using the estimated tuition for 2023-24 with a 2% increase for each Academic Year thereafter. The calculations assume that students are taking classes in fall, spring, and summer. 10% of the students for each year were counted as generating 3 SCH's (taking one course) while the remainder are expected to generate 6 SCH's (taking two courses).

Year	Full-Time Students (6 SCH)	FT Subtotal	Part-Time Students (3 SCH)	PT Subtotal	Total Tuition
2025-26	3 x $3,346 x 3	30,114	27 x $1,673 x 3	135,513	165,627
2026-27	4 x $3,413 x 3	40,956	40 x $1,706 x 3	204,720	245,676
2027-28	5 x $3,481 x 3	52,215	48 x $1,740 x 3	250,560	302,775
2028-29	6 x $3,551 x 3	63,918	56 x $1,775 x 3	298,200	362,118
2029-30	7 x 3,622 x 3	76,062	66 x 1,810 x 3	358,380	434,442

Grants

N/A

Other

N/A

ACADEMIC PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

MS in Occupational Innovation and Effectiveness

Prepared for Middle Tennessee State University

December 2022

In the following report, Hanover assesses demand for the proposed MS in Occupational Innovation and Effectiveness. Specifically, Hanover analyzes demand within Tennessee for potential program focus blocks. This report includes an examination of student demand, industry trends, and an analysis of potential competitor programs.

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HIGHER EDUCATION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on an analysis of degree completions, labor market demand, and market competitors, Hanover recommends that Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU):

MOVE FORWARD WITH THE PROPOSED MASTER'S DEGREE, DEVELOPING A MIX OF FOCUS BLOCKS THAT BUILD KNOWLEDGE IN FUNCTIONAL BUSINESS AREAS AND THOSE THAT DEVELOP IN-DEMAND SKILLS.

Recent degree and certificate completion trends in Tennessee demonstrate stable or growing student demand for fields closely related to the MS in Occupational Innovation and Effectiveness. While the proposed program will be unique within the national market, a review of the most comparable programs identified by Hanover suggests that MTSU may have the most success if it offers a combination of focus blocks that emphasize business knowledge-building and those dedicated to the development of discrete, in-demand skills. Based on trends in conferrals, benchmarked programs, and skills requested by Tennessee employers, focus block topics that may be most attractive to students and/or align with labor market need include operations research, project management, organizational leadership, management, marketing, finance, professional communication, computer programming, presentation skills, and data analysis.

DELIVER THE PROGRAM ONLINE AS PLANNED.

Programs that are most comparable to the proposed MS in Occupational Innovation and Effectiveness in structure and curriculum are typically delivered fully online. Programs that do no offer fully online delivery provide at least some online course options. To compete with existing programs and offer flexibility that appeals to a variety of students, including working professionals, MTSU should move forward with online delivery.

CONSIDER INCORPORATING WORDS SUCH AS "BUSINESS" OR "LEADERSHIP" INTO THE DEGREE TITLE AND DESCRIPTION TO CLEARLY COMMUNICATE THE PROGRAM'S ACADEMIC FOCUS AND DRIVE WEBSITE TRAFFIC.

Over half of reviewed offerings include "business" in their degree title, which helps to communicate their programmatic focus. Incorporating similar language into its own program nomenclature and description may help the proposed program resonate with prospective students while also promoting traffic to the program's website. For example, phrases such as "business innovation", "business studies", and "business skills training" are associated with robust monthly search volume.

KEY FINDINGS

A review of degree and certificate completion trends shows strong student demand for organizational leadership, management science, and marketing across geographic levels. These subjects generally lead reviewed fields in terms of conferral volume and/or growth from 2017 to 2021. Across all reviewed fields, overall student demand is stable or growing at every geographic level, suggesting viable student demand for the fields most closely associated with the MS in Occupational and Effectiveness. Smaller fields such as computer programming, operations research, project management, customer service management, and human resources management show some promise and may be viable as focus blocks, especially if MTSU can recruit students from outside of the state.

In-demand skills requested in recent job ads for all occupations in Tennessee, including business and management occupations, include knowledge of programming languages, finance, agile management, presentation, and data analysis. The most common programming languages requested by employers include JavaScript and Structured Query Language (SQL). In addition to the previously mentioned in-demand skills, ads for business and management roles also commonly seek candidates with skills in marketing and change management.

Some of the most common skills requested by employers of business students include interpersonal skills, motivation, leadership, strategy, and innovation. Like Tennessee employers, surveyed global employers of business students request that job candidates have several soft skills, such as interpersonal skills (e.g., communication), leadership and management skills, and motivation. In addition, surveyed global employers request skills not commonly mentioned by Tennessee employers, including decision-making skills, strategy and innovation, and strategic and systems skills.

A review of the competitive landscape reveals very few programs with the same structure as the MS in Occupational Innovation and Effectiveness. Hanover did not identify any existing master's programs composed of a capstone and three non-certificate stackable focus blocks that emphasize on specific business skills. However, stackable master's programs that include the completion of two to three graduate certificates as a part of the degree are more common.

Most benchmarked programs include "business" in the program title. Four of six programs have "business" in their title, which may offer clarity on their academic focus. George Washington University's title of "Interdisciplinary Business Studies" provides additional transparency, noting the master's program focuses on various business areas. Drury University's program does not include "business" in the title, but its Master in Integrative Leadership signifies that the program is leadership-focused.

FAST FACTS

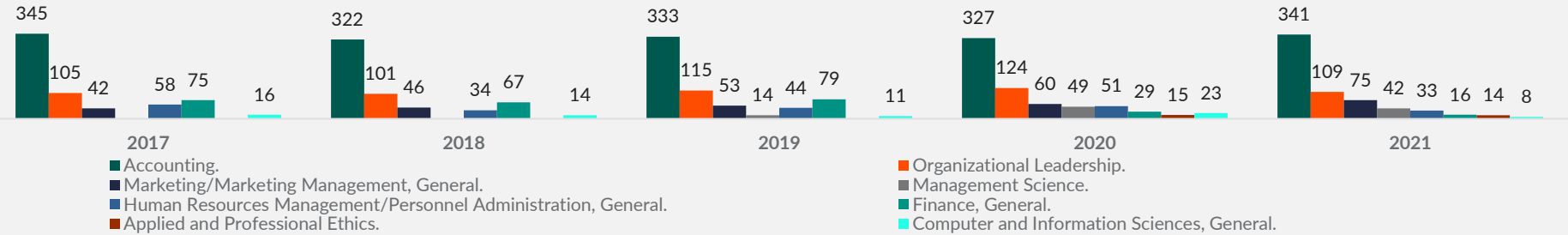|		
	30	Most common number of credits required to earn benchmarked master's degrees
	5/6	Number of benchmarked programs that have completely online deliveries
	$34,330	Average cost of benchmarked master's degree program

STUDENT DEMAND ANALYSIS

ANALYSIS

A review of degree and certificate completions in the state, region, and nation in the past five years indicate that computer programming, operations research, project management, organizational leadership, management science, and marketing present promising opportunities for focus blocks within the planned MS in Occupational Innovation and Effectiveness. These subjects rank among the largest and/or fastest-growing master's and certificate fields in Tennessee, the Southeast, and the nation. Aggregate degree and certificate conferrals across all reviewed fields are stable or growing at every geographic level, suggesting viable student demand for the subjects most closely relative to the MS in Occupational Innovation and Effectiveness. The following two pages provide further analysis of conferral trends across a wider array of business-related field in the state, region, and nation from 2017 to 2021.

MASTER'S DEGREE COMPLETIONS
Tennessee distribution of degree completions from 2017 to 2021

Legend:
- Accounting.
- Organizational Leadership.
- Marketing/Marketing Management, General.
- Management Science.
- Human Resources Management/Personnel Administration, General.
- Finance, General.
- Applied and Professional Ethics.
- Computer and Information Sciences, General.

CERTIFICATE COMPLETIONS
Tennessee distribution of undergraduate and graduate certificate completions from 2017 to 2021

Legend:
- Management Science.
- Organizational Leadership.
- Accounting.
- Computer and Information Sciences, General.
- Project Management.
- Human Resources Management/Personnel Administration, General.
- Marketing/Marketing Management, General.

HR

HIGHER EDUCATION
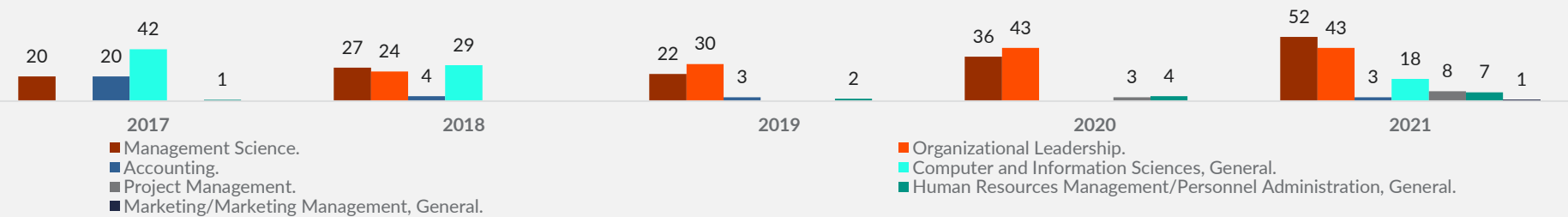
STUDENT DEMAND DATA

Master's degree conferral trends from 2017 to 2021 demonstrate relatively high and growing student interest for master's degrees in management, organizational leadership, and marketing at all geographic levels. While the field remained small in 2021, applied and professional ethics experienced some conferral growth in the state, region, and nation. Outside of Tennessee, student demand trends are also relatively positive for master's programs in computer science and programming, project management, and human resources management, suggesting that focus blocks in these areas may be viable if MTSU can draw students from across the region or nation.

TOTAL MASTER'S DEGREE COMPLETIONS
Aggregate degree completions by geographic level (2021) and compound annual growth rate (CAGR) for 2017-2021

	Tennessee		Regional		National	
	2021	**CAGR**	**2021**	**CAGR**	**2021**	**CAGR**
Computer and Information Sciences, General.	8	-15.9%	3,583	4.7%	11,283	-0.6%
Computer Programming/Programmer, General	0	--	8	0.0%	212	38.9%
Operations Research	0	--	74	-1.6%	957	1.7%
Applied and Professional Ethics.	14	--	15	--	31	14.6%
Customer Service Management.	0	--	0	--	0	-100.0%
Project Management.	0	--	251	-0.7%	1,583	11.5%
Organizational Leadership.	109	0.9%	1,034	5.8%	7,089	7.8%
Accounting.	341	-0.3%	3,930	-2.9%	16,746	-4.0%
Business/Corporate Communications, General.	0	--	0	--	59	-8.7%
Finance, General.	16	-32.0%	662	1.2%	4,166	-10.9%
Human Resources Management/Personnel Administration, General.	33	-13.1%	823	-4.3%	6,010	6.0%
Management Science.	42	--	1,987	53.6%	15,708	44.7%
Marketing/Marketing Management, General.	75	15.6%	689	12.1%	2,560	0.9%
Total Completions, Observed Fields	638		13,056		66,404	
Growth Rate, Observed Fields	-0.1%		4.4%		4.3%	
Growth Rate, All Fields	0.0%		2.7%		1.9%	

METHODOLOGY NOTE: For this analysis, Hanover retrieved conferrals and completions data for business subfields that correlate to specific business skills that may offer opportunities to be offered as module within the MS in Occupational Innovation and Effectiveness. Business subfields that grew in conferrals or completions from 2017 to 2021 are colored green.

STUDENT DEMAND DATA

Completion trends in Tennessee reveal relatively low but growing student demand for several business fields at the certificate level, including customer service management, organizational leadership, and management. The modular nature of the proposed degree and its focus block structure merit an analysis of certificate conferral trends for a comprehensive assessment of student demand. Certificate conferrals in project management and human resources management also increased from 2017 to 2021; however, these fields remain especially small, with less than 10 conferrals each in 2021. Except for accounting, all other reviewed fields have experienced substantial growth in regional and/or national student demand at the certificate level.

TOTAL CERTIFICATE COMPLETIONS
Aggregate undergraduate and graduate certificate completions by geographic level (2021) and compound annual growth rate (CAGR) for 2017-2021

	Tennessee		Regional		National	
	2021	**CAGR**	**2021**	**CAGR**	**2021**	**CAGR**
Computer and Information Sciences, General.	18	-19.1%	4,325	7.2%	8,098	4.7%
Computer Programming/Programmer, General.	0	--	990	10.1%	3,616	1.7%
Operations Research.	0	--	1	0.0%	177	10.9%
Applied and Professional Ethics.	0	--	1	--	29	38.0%
Customer Service Management.	30	--	30	134.0%	126	-6.9%
Project Management.	8	--	157	14.3%	1,769	14.8%
Organizational Leadership.	44	--	387	15.6%	1,770	20.6%
Accounting.	3	-37.8%	602	-19.8%	3,182	-6.0%
Business/Corporate Communications, General.	0	--	1	-47.3%	103	48.8%
Finance, General.	0	--	68	54.3%	767	16.7%
Human Resources Management/Personnel Administration, General.	7	62.7%	868	6.6%	4,889	13.1%
Management Science.	52	27.0%	673	48.9%	2,084	33.2%
Marketing/Marketing Management, General.	1	--	574	5.1%	2,173	3.5%
Total Completions, Observed Fields	163		8,677		28,783	
Growth Rate, Observed Fields	18.4%		5.4%		6.5%	
Growth Rate, All Fields	-3.8%		2.2%		1.5%	

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REAL-TIME JOB POSTINGS INTELLIGENCE - TENNESSEE

In-demand skills across all recent job openings in Tennessee include knowledge of programming languages, finance, presentation, agile management, and data analysis. These hard skills also rank among the most in-demand when analyzing job ads for business and management occupations specifically. The most sought after soft skills include communication, cooperativeness, and problem-solving skills. Other commonly-requested skills in the state include marketing, change management, and customer relationship management. All data reflect ads for job openings that require at least a bachelor's degree.

TOP HARD SKILLS – ALL OCCUPATIONS

- ✓ **JavaScript** (7,280 postings)
- ✓ **Structured Query Language (SQL)** (5,454 postings)
- ✓ **Presentation** (5,247 postings)
- ✓ **Agile** (5,183 postings)
- ✓ **Computer Programming/Coding** (4,216 postings)
- ✓ **Finance** (3,924 postings)
- ✓ **Data Analysis** (3,646 postings)
- ✓ **Customer Relationship Management (CRM)** (3,601 postings)

TOP HARD SKILLS – BUSINESS OCCUPATIONS

- ✓ **JavaScript** (3,043 postings)
- ✓ **Finance** (2,850 postings)
- ✓ **Presentation** (2,794 postings)
- ✓ **Agile** (2,192)
- ✓ **Structured Query Language (SQL)** (2,004 postings)
- ✓ **Marketing** (1,932 postings)
- ✓ **Change Management** (1,927 postings)
- ✓ **Data Analysis** (1,889 postings)

TOP CERTIFICATIONS – ALL OCCUPATIONS

- ✓ **Registered Nurse (RN)** (1,826 postings)
- ✓ **Certification in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)** (1,576 postings)
- ✓ **Certified Public Accountant (CPA)** (1,507 postings)
- ✓ **Basic Life Support (BLS)** (1,354 postings)
- ✓ **Project Management Professional (PMP)** (799 postings)
- ✓ **Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW)** (640 postings)

TOP CERTIFICATIONS – BUSINESS OCCUPATIONS

- ✓ **Certified Public Accountant (CPA)** (1,507 postings)
- ✓ **Project Management Professional (PMP)** (566 postings)
- ✓ **Professional in Human Resources (PHR)** (311 postings)
- ✓ **Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP)** (233 postings)
- ✓ **Certified Information Systems Auditor (CISA)** (217 postings)
- ✓ **Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR)** (204 postings)

TOP SOFT SKILLS – ALL OCCUPATIONS

- • **Communication (Verbal and written skills)** (56,647 postings)
- • **Cooperative/Team Player** (37,419 postings)
- • **Problem Solving** (20,068 postings)
- • **Analytical** (16,145 postings)
- • **Organization** (15,235 postings)
- • **Supervision/Management** (15,160 postings)
- • **Project Management** (14,170 postings)
- • **Interpersonal Relationships/Maintain Relationships** (13,623 postings)
- • **Self-Motivated/Ability to Work Independently/Self Leadership** (13,030 postings)
- • **Detail Oriented/Meticulous** (12,541 postings)
- • **Adaptability/Flexibility/Tolerance of Change and Uncertainty** (12,313 postings)
- • **Customer Service** (10,242 postings)
- • **Leadership** (9,379 postings)
- • **Prioritize** (9,249 postings)

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IN-DEMAND BUSINESS SKILLS

The Graduate Management Admission Council's (GMAC) 2022 Corporate Recruiters Survey reports the skills that employers of business school graduates most commonly request. Like employers in Tennessee, surveyed employers of business students prefer candidates with several soft skills, such as interpersonal skills (e.g., communication), leadership and management skills, and motivation. In addition, surveyed global employers request skills not commonly mentioned by Tennessee employers, including decision-making skills, strategy and innovation, and strategic and systems skills. MTSU may consider incorporating courses that align with these in-demand skills in its MS in Occupational Innovation and Effectiveness to prepare graduates to meet career goals and obtain employment.

MOST IMPORTANT KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS FOR BUSINESS SCHOOL GRADUATES TO POSSESS FOR CURRENT JOB OPENINGS, BY INDUSTRY

	Overall	Consulting	Energy/ Utilities	Finance/ Accounting	Healthcare	Technology	Manufacturing	Nonprofit/ Government	Products/ Services	Staffing Firm
Interpersonal skills	63%	74%	68%	63%	68%	59%	60%	42%	66%	49%
Learning, motivation, and leadership	62%	70%	45%	63%	77%	60%	57%	48%	66%	57%
Decision-making processes	54%	60%	50%	56%	55%	49%	62%	40%	55%	53%
Strategy and innovation	58%	60%	64%	52%	55%	63%	62%	40%	66%	42%
Strategic and systems skills	54%	60%	55%	59%	51%	59%	57%	31%	52%	47%
Business ethics	44%	56%	41%	48%	38%	47%	41%	31%	44%	41%
Knowledge of business functions	48%	54%	27%	56%	51%	53%	49%	25%	51%	43%
Generative thinking	39%	46%	50%	32%	28%	43%	30%	40%	45%	31%
Task environment	34%	40%	45%	32%	26%	29%	35%	33%	36%	34%
Interpersonal orientation	36%	34%	32%	33%	34%	38%	44%	35%	34%	33%
Knowledge of tech, product design, and production	39%	33%	32%	37%	28%	55%	52%	23%	37%	38%
Tools and technology	37%	33%	18%	35%	34%	44%	46%	23%	42%	38%
Foundation skills	30%	33%	14%	37%	28%	32%	22%	38%	30%	32%
Conscientiousness	28%	31%	14%	29%	28%	28%	29%	31%	26%	28%
Operations skills	36%	30%	27%	30%	15%	38%	51%	33%	47%	31%
Human capital	28%	26%	32%	22%	15%	32%	37%	23%	32%	33%
Administrative activities	26%	23%	9%	24%	19%	29%	22%	29%	40%	32%
Knowledge of human behavior	29%	21%	14%	37%	30%	26%	25%	35%	33%	32%
Corporate social responsibility	28%	16%	41%	25%	28%	28%	32%	44%	26%	36%
Knowledge of media communications	21%	13%	18%	17%	19%	25%	16%	35%	23%	35%

COMPETITOR ANALYSIS

ANALYSIS

A review of the competitive landscape reveals that programs structured comparably to the MS in Occupational Innovation and Effectiveness are rare in the United States. Hanover did not identify any existing master's programs that consist of three stackable credentials that each focus on a particular business skill and a capstone project. Instead, the most comparable programs are business master's degree that require students to pursue two to three graduate certificates to satisfy a large portion of program requirements. While not as modular as MTSU's proposed program, institutions typically position such programs as stackable and customizable. Stackable MBA degrees are also relatively common. These programs typically include a core MBA curriculum consisting of several courses. To earn the degree, students supplement the core with completion of one to three graduate certificates in different business subfields.

To provide MTSU with a more comprehensive understanding of the competitive landscape, Hanover benchmarked six programs found at institutions across the nation. While the offerings reviewed in this analysis are the most relevant programs identified by Hanover, benchmarked programs are more similar in structure to the proposed MS in Occupational Innovation and Effectiveness than in content. Benchmarked programs focus more on developing knowledge in different areas of business (e.g., leadership, human resources management) rather than developing specific skills. Of the six profiled programs, three are non-MBA master's degrees, and two are non-degree programs. Except for courses offered in the Anderson Business Academy by the University of New Mexico, all identified programs are credit-bearing. Courses offered in the Anderson Business Academy by the University of New Mexico offer continuing education units (CEUs).

COMPARATOR PROGRAMS

Institution	Institution Type	Program	2021 Conferrals	2017-2021 CAGR
Cedar Crest College	Private	Modular Master of Science	18*	-3.8%*
Drury University	Private	Master in Integrative Leadership	9**	73.2%**
George Washington University	Private	MS in Interdisciplinary Business Studies	4	--
Rutgers University	Public	Stackable Business Innovation Program	--	--
University of Missouri	Public	MS in Business	73***	-3.2%***
University of New Mexico	Public	Anderson Business Academy	--	--

* Completions data comes from IPEDS conferrals reported under CIP 52.0201. Business Administration and Management, General
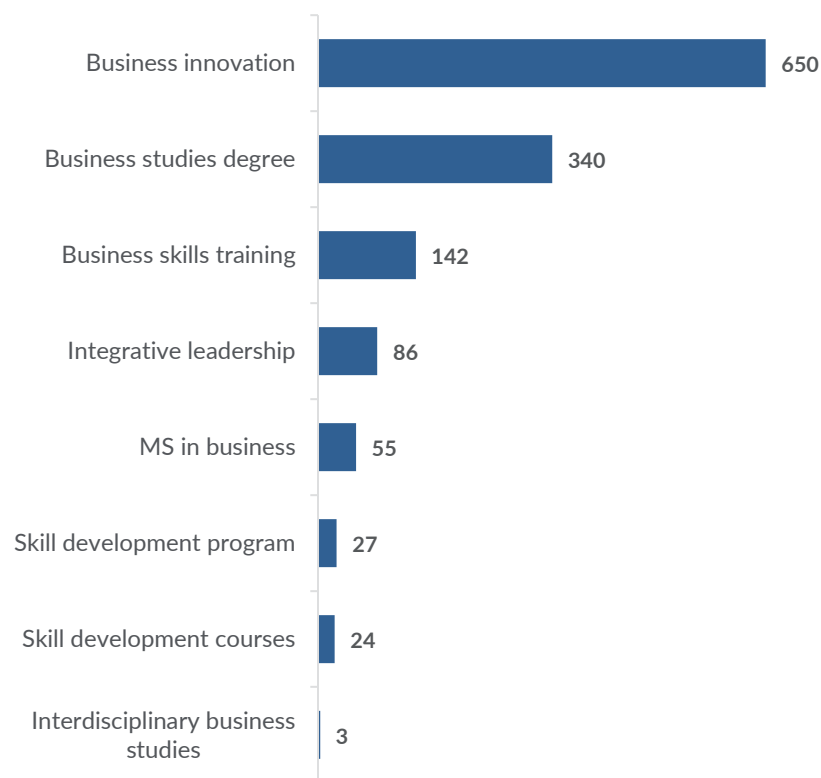** Completions data comes from IPEDS conferrals reported under CIP 52.0213. Organizational Leadership
*** Completions data comes from IPEDS conferrals reported under CIP 52.0101 Business/Commerce, General

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OCCUPATIONAL INNOVATION AND EFFECTIVENESS-RELATED KEYWORD SEARCHES

Specific monthly search volume for keywords related to the name and curricula for the proposed Occupational Innovation and Effectiveness degree

Keyword	Search Volume
Business innovation	650
Business studies degree	340
Business skills training	142
Integrative leadership	86
MS in business	55
Skill development program	27
Skill development courses	24
Interdisciplinary business studies	3

Note: For this analysis, Hanover retrieved search engine analytics data from MOZ.com, a proprietary search engine optimization (SEO) firm. These data reflect the "actual" average keyword search volume in the United States over the past 12 months as of December 2022.

PROGRAM NOMENCLATURE

Four out of six programs include "business" in their title, which clarifies their primary academic focus. George Washington University's "Interdisciplinary Business Studies" title offers additional transparency, noting that the master's program focuses on various business knowledge areas, which may help attract students interested in studying several business-related subjects in one program. Drury University's program does not include "business" in the title, but its Master in Integrative Leadership signifies that the program is leadership-focused. To better communicate the academic focus of the proposed master's program to prospective students, MTSU may wish to consider altering its proposed program title to include terms such as "business skills" or "business studies" or more explicitly communicate its orientation toward professional upskilling.

Search engine analytics reveal that "occupational innovation and effectiveness" may garner less search interest than other related terms like "business innovation" and "business studies." While search engine analytics for the term "occupational innovation and effectiveness" are not reported by Moz.com – possibly due to low search volume – several related search terms have relatively high search interest and may attract more prospective students to a website for the master's program. Specifically, including terms like "business innovation," "business studies degree," and "business skills training" in the degree title or description on the program website may garner more search interest than using "occupational innovation and effectiveness" alone.

METHODOLOGY NOTE:

Hanover performed a search for the proposed program name ("Occupational Innovation and Effectiveness") as well as for the program names of benchmarked programs. Moz.com reports that the search volume data for these search terms is unavailable. To help MTSU understand how best to name and market its program, Hanover performed a keyword search for terms related to the proposed program name and content. Search terms with available data and the most monthly search volumes are included in the charts to the left.

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PROGRAM TYPE AND STRUCTURE

Of the six benchmarked programs, four are master's degree programs. Within all four profiled master's degree programs that have structures similar to the proposed MS in Occupational Innovation and Effectiveness, students complete two graduate certificates in addition to a set of core courses or additional elective courses. In three programs, students complete six to 12 credits of core courses with their graduate certificates, and in George Washington University's MS in Interdisciplinary Business Studies, students complete six credits of electives in addition to the two graduate certificates. Each master's program has between six and 23 certificate options that students can choose to complete in the program.

Among the master's programs requiring core courses, two require capstones. Students in Cedar Crest College's capstone course "develop an applied, integrated thesis that demonstrates skills and insights for evaluating, articulating and pitching a new product or service, either as a start-up business or a new initiative within an existing firm." Students in Drury University's capstone course "design and complete an applied capstone project that draws upon theoretical foundations in the disciplines in which the certificates are grounded. The project, designed to inform professional practice, will demonstrate skill in oral and written as well as competencies in research, analysis and integrative thinking."

Two profiled institutions offer a selection of courses that students can choose to complete either on their own or in combination with other courses to earn a certificate. Courses in profiled programs at Rutgers University and the University of New Mexico are grouped into subject areas and students can choose to complete as many courses as they would like. Students at the University of New Mexico receive digital badges upon completion of each course they take. Students in both programs have the option to complete several courses to receive a non-credit certificate.

CREDITS

30
Benchmarked master's programs most commonly require students to complete 30 credits to earn the degree. The University of Missouri is the only master's program that differs and requires 36-45 credits, depending on the certificates that students choose to complete while in the program.

3
Courses offered through Rutgers University's non-degree Stackable Business Innovation Program are typically worth three credits each. Some short courses worth one credit are also offered.

0
The University of New Mexico's Anderson Business Academy courses are not for credit.

TARGET AUDIENCE

Four programs are targeted toward working professionals while the remaining programs do not specify the intended program audience. Programs at Cedar Crest College and Rutgers University specify that they are for working professionals, George Washington University's program is advertised as open to early-career, mid-career, and experienced professionals, and the University of New Mexico's non-credit courses are targeted towards specific audiences of working professionals (e.g., some courses are intended for human resources employees). Drury University's program does not specify if it is intended for working professionals, but it is intended for those interested in leadership roles. The University of Missouri does not advertise its intended audience.

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STACKABLE COMPONENTS

Several benchmarked programs have stackable options. Specifically, three master's degree programs report that students in the program can complete graduate certificates independently or can complete certificates as they work towards the completion of the benchmarked master's degree program. Just one of these programs – offered by Drury University – specifically notes that students who have previously earned a graduate certificate can later apply those credits toward the master's program. Profiled programs at Rutgers University and the University of New Mexico allow students to complete individual courses à la carte or complete multiple courses and "stack" those courses towards a non-degree certificate. In addition, course credits completed in Rutgers Stackable Business Innovation Program can be applied towards a master's degree.
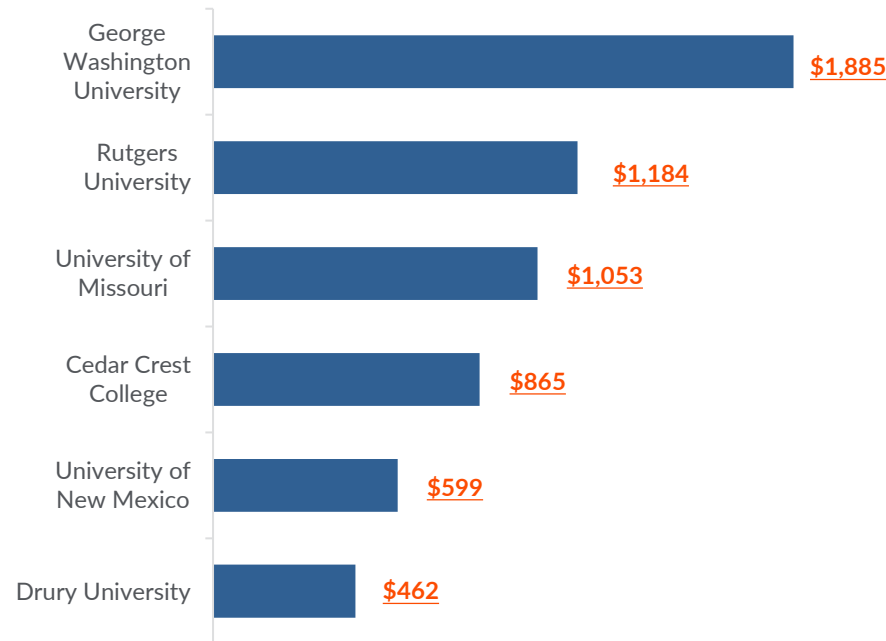
DELIVERY FORMAT

Five benchmarked programs have completely online delivery options. Of these five, three also offer on-campus options for at least some components of the program. One benchmarked program – offered by George Washington University – is offered in a hybrid format.

4	2	1
Online and hybrid options	Online only	Hybrid only

PER-CREDIT TUITION

Tuition ranges from $462 per credit for core courses at Drury University to $2,054 per credit for out-of-state students at the Rutgers University. For profiled master's programs, the average tuition cost is $34,330.

University	Per-Credit Tuition
George Washington University	$1,885
Rutgers University	$1,184
University of Missouri	$1,053
Cedar Crest College	$865
University of New Mexico	$599
Drury University	$462

Notes on Tuition:
- Core courses at Drury University are $462 per credit, while certificate per-credit costs range from $462-$792. Core courses costs is shown in the chart.
- Rutgers University's in-state cost is $1,184 per credit and the out-of-state cost is $2,054 per credit. In-state costs are shown in the chart.
- Core courses at the University of Missouri are $1,053.33 per credit (calculated by dividing core business foundation cost by 12 total core credits), and certificate credit costs vary. Specific per-credit rates for certificates are not provided. Core course costs are shown in the chart.

COURSE CONTENT

Each benchmarked master's degree and non-degree program offers several course and certificate options across a variety of business topics. The most common topics in which students can complete certificates and courses are below:

Leadership *(5 programs)*	**Analytics** *(4 programs)*	**Information systems management** *(4 programs)*
Marketing/Digital marketing *(4 programs)*	**Accounting** *(3 programs)*	**Finance/Financial management** *(3 programs)*
Healthcare/ Healthcare management *(3 programs)*	**Human resources/capital management** *(3 programs)*	**Supply chain management** *(3 programs)*
Artificial intelligence in business *(2 programs)*	**Business/Supply chain law** *(2 programs)*	**Diversity leadership** *(2 programs)*
Entrepreneurship *(2 programs)*	**Nonprofit management** *(2 programs)*	

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT COURSES

While many of the certificates and courses offered in benchmarked programs focus on developing knowledge in different areas of business, profiled programs also offer several courses and certificates that focus more specifically on developing certain business skills. Below is a selection of graduate certificates and courses offered by profiled institutions that teach help professionals to grow in specific skill areas:

Organizational and Professional Communication

Students in this subject area learn interpersonal communication, mass communication and media, organizational communication, and technical communication skills.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Leadership

This certificate "is designed to provide students with the practical knowledge necessary to understand the challenges surrounding equity, inclusion and cultural consciousness"

Quantitative Business Foundations

Designed for students without a business degree, this certificate "offers functional instruction in accounting, marketing, finance, organizational behavior, and human resource management."

Cloud, Applications, and Information Technology

This certificate "trains business leaders to learn, design, and implement cloud architecture and policies."

Cybersecurity Assurance

Students in this concentration learn "the process of continuous auditing from start to finish and how to perform continuous control monitoring and risk assessment in real-time."

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHTS

GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

In addition to its graduate certificates that focus on enhancing business knowledge, George Washington University has several skills-focused certificates that students in its master's program can complete. The University offers certificates in several fields, including finance and accounting, analytics, management, information technology systems, innovation, marketing, human capital, and business foundations. Below are examples of available skills-focused certificates.

Graduate Certificate in Business Crisis, Continuity, and Recovery Management

"The graduate certificate in business crisis, continuity, and recovery management provides a deep understanding of a comprehensive systems approach to risk identification, analysis, prioritization, managing and reducing these risks, and establishing effective structure and process for managing business crises and disasters through to full recovery."

Graduate Certificate in Management of Technology and Innovation

"This graduate certificate in management of technology and innovation provides a broad treatment of the management of science and technology as well as innovation. The curriculum focuses on the management of organizations and the professional workforce involved in conceiving, developing, and delivering products and services involving technology of all kinds."

Graduate Certificate in Strategic Management

"The graduate certificate in strategic management program prepares future business leaders with strategic management principles by emphasizing the executive manager's perspective and evaluating the strategy of various types of organizations in the global economy. The curriculum covers key areas associated with strategic management, including corporate strategy, competitive strategy, corporate political and nonmarket strategy, business and government relations, strategic decision making, strategic networks, and strategic leadership."

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY

Like George Washington University, Rutgers University's program offers several courses that help professionals develop specific skills. The program offers courses in six categories: accounting and information systems, finance and economics, management and global business, management science and information systems, marketing, and supply chain management. A sample of courses that the program offers that focus on specific skills is below.

Business Analytics Programming
"This course teaches the principles of programming for business analytics using the Python and R programming languages...The course provides students with a working knowledge of programming and fundamental insights into what a programmer does."

Supply Chain Sustainability
"This course will allow students to participate in applied research to explore the application of environmentally responsible supply chain principles which includes: designing supply chain management and procurement schemes which address environmental, social and ethical considerations in organizational policy development as well as the procurement process."

Product Innovation
"This course introduces concepts and methods used for coordinating strategy formulation and the identification and evaluation of new product opportunities; planning and organizing the process of development; testing new products and new markets; and commercialization."

AI in Accounting and Assurance
"This course reviews the nature of accounting and auditing problems and the need for application of artificial intelligence technologies to the discipline. This includes current accounting issues for which new AI development should be fruitful, particularly auditing and assurance."

Institution	Program	Program Type	Credits	Delivery Mode	Program Structure	Core Courses	Certificate/Course Options	Target Audience	Notable Features
Cedar Crest College *Allentown, PA*	Modular Master of Science	Master's Degree	30	Online or Hybrid	**Students complete** • 2 online core courses (6 credits) • 2 graduate certificates in areas of choice	• Managerial and Leadership Skills (3 credits) • Integrated Capstone (3 credits)	**Certificate options (12 credits each):** • Dietetic Internship (online or onsite) • Diversity and Women's Leadership (online or hybrid) • Health Care Management (online) • Human Resource Management (online) • Management Information Systems (online) • Strategic Leadership (online or hybrid)	Working professionals looking for flexible, specialized alternative to MBA	• Core Managerial and Leadership Skills course helps students identify individual leadership strengths and developmental needs • In Integrated Capstone course, students develop an applied, integrated thesis that demonstrates skills and insights for evaluating, articulating and pitching a new product or service • Students can complete graduate certificates by themselves or apply them towards the master's degree
Drury University *Springfield, MO*	Master in Integrative Leadership	Master's Degree	30	Online	**Students complete** • 2 online core courses (6 credits) • 2 graduate certificates in areas of choice	• Integrative Connections I: Research and Project Planning (3 credits) • Integrative Connections II: Capstone Project (3 credits)	**Certificate options (12 credits each):** • Data Leadership • Business Ventures Leadership • Nonprofit Leadership • Public Safety Leadership • Instructional Design and Technology Leadership • Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Leadership	Individuals interested in leadership roles	• Certificate courses are 8-week sessions, starting in the fall and ending in the spring, making it possible to complete a 4-course certificate in 2 semesters • Students who have previously earned 1 graduate certificate at Drury may apply for the master's program

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PROGRAM BENCHMARKING

Institution	Program	Program Type	Credits	Delivery Mode	Program Structure	Core Courses	Certificate/Course Options	Target Audience	Notable Features
George Washington University *Washington, D.C.*	MS in Interdisciplinary Business Studies	Master's Degree	30	Hybrid Several certificates are available online (these are noted in the Certificate/Course Options column), but elective courses and remaining certificates are not advertised as being available online	**Students complete** • 6 credits of elective courses • 2 graduate certificates in areas of choice	--	**Certificate options (12 credits each):** • Accountancy • Analytics for managers • Artificial intelligence • Business analytics • Business crisis, continuity, and recovery management • Capital markets • Cloud, applications, and information technology • Corporate responsibility • Creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship • Digital marketing and analytics • Financial management • Energy systems management • Environmental systems management • Global management • Human capital (online) • Investments and portfolio management • Management leadership (online) • Management of technology and innovation (online) • Marketing and brand management • Project management (online) • Quantitative business foundations (online) • Sport management • Strategic management **Elective Options:** Students choose any 6 credits of elective courses	Early-career, mid-career, and experienced professionals	• Admission to the MIBS program is highly competitive and enrollment is limited. Students operate in two cohorts throughout the academic year.

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PROGRAM BENCHMARKING

Institution	Program	Program Type	Credits	Delivery Mode	Program Structure	Core Courses	Certificate/Course Options	Target Audience	Notable Features
Rutgers University *New Brunswick, NJ*	Stackable Business Innovation Program	Individual Courses	Most courses are 3 credits 1-credit short courses offered	Online and In-Person courses available	Students earn graduate course credits at their own discretion and can apply them toward a non-degree certificate Courses are separated into several concentration areas	--	**Students can complete courses in the following concentration areas:** • Audit Analytics • Auditing and Forensic Accounting • Information Technology Audit • Cybersecurity Assurance • Continuous Auditing • Artificial Intelligence in Accounting and Assurance • Blockchain and Smart Contracts in Accounting • Crypto-Instruments and Their Ecosystem • Financial Data Analytics and FinTech • New Technologies in Commercial Real Estate • Managing in the Global Business Environment • Digital Strategies and Leadership • Corporate Social Innovation • Data Analytics and Machine Learning • Managerial Information Technology • Data Forecasting and Mining • Business Analytics for Operations • Cyber Security • Marketing Analytics • Digital Marketing • Pharmaceutical Marketing • Marketing Innovation • Supply Chain Analytics • Healthcare Operations Management • Healthcare Analytics • Global Procurement Management • Supply Chain Law and Contracts • New Product Commercialization • Future Trends in Supply Chain Management • Supply Chain Sustainability and Social Compliance • Supply Chain Modeling and Simulation	"Working professionals in search of upskilling opportunities, but also upper-level undergraduate students and other curious people who would like to try out the rSBI program by sampling courses of interest with minimal commitment of time and financial resources."	• Many of the course credits can then be transferred toward completing a master's degree • Students can complete individual courses à la carte , or students can stack courses together towards a specific concentration to earn a non-degree certificate. Students can also transfer courses towards a master's degree

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PROGRAM BENCHMARKING

Institution	Program	Program Type	Credits	Delivery Mode	Program Structure	Core Courses	Certificate/Course Options	Target Audience	Notable Features
University of Missouri *Columbia, MO*	MS in Business	Master's Degree	36-45 credits, depending on certificates chosen	Online, with some on-campus certificate options	**Students complete** 12 credits of core courses (7 courses) 2 graduate certificates in areas of choice	• Accounting for Managers • Managerial Finance • Economics for Business • Organizational Behavior and Management: Macro Processes • Intro to Strategic Management • Managerial Marketing • Advanced Marketing Management	**Certificate options (12-18 credits each):** • Assurance/Audit • Center For The Digital Globe • Construction Management • Digital Merchandising • Dispute Resolution • Financial Management • Global Public Health • Global Supply Chain Management • Health Informatics • Health Care Project Management • Higher Education Administration • Informatics For Public Health • Investments • Life Science Innovation And Entrepreneurship • Marketing Analytics • Nonprofit Management • Organizational Change And Conflict Management • Personal Financial Planning • Public Health • Public Management • Tax	While target audience not specified, the following information is shared: **2019 class profile** ○ Class size: 19 ○ Average age: 27 ○ Average GPA: 3.41 ○ Average work experience: 4.75 years	• Several certificates are offered in partnership with a department outside of the College of Business (e.g., College of Engineering, School of Health Professions) • Graduate certificates can be "pursued as stand-alone certificate or combined to build a flexible, interdisciplinary Master of Science in Business"

Source: Institutional Websites (see embedded hyperlinks)

PROGRAM BENCHMARKING

Institution	Program	Program Type	Credits	Delivery Mode	Program Structure	Core Courses	Certificate/Course Options	Target Audience	Notable Features
University of New Mexico *Albuquerque, NM*	Anderson Business Academy	Individual Courses	Courses are not for credit	Online	Students can complete non-credit courses in several subject areas, called units. Courses can be completed as stand-alone courses or if students complete courses in 7 units, they will receive certificate Students receive digital badge upon completion of a course	--	**Students can take courses in the following subject areas:** • Human resources • Digital marketing • Accounting • Data Analytics • Entrepreneurship • Business Law • Organizational and Professional Communication • Information Systems • Management and Leadership • Advanced Management and Leadership • Finance • Supply Chain Management • Marketing	Varies by topic area, including managers, human resource employees, etc. In general, working professionals are the audience.	• University offers additional skill development courses on Microsoft software and business programs • Student can take courses à la carte , or students can take courses to complete 7 separate units (e.g., human resources unit) to earn the "Anderson Executive & Professional Education Certified Business Professional" certificate

Source: Institutional Websites (see embedded hyperlinks)

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July 21st 2023

To:
Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC)

Subject: Letter of Support for Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) proposed Master of Science in Occupational Innovation and Effectiveness

To whom it may concern,

The Greater Nashville Technology Council (NTC) is pleased to provide this letter of support for Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) proposed Master of Science in Occupational Innovation and Effectiveness.

The NTC supports the entire Middle Tennessee technology community, including over 550 corporate members and extensive partnerships with educators and policy makers across the region. The NTC mission is to advance the diverse technology ecosystem by connecting and promoting members, attracting, growing, and retaining tech talent, and providing opportunities to reinvest in the Greater Nashville community. In support of our mission, our members, and our community partners, the NTC has created and grown many Tech Talent programs to support its stakeholders in attracting, growing, and retaining tech talent.

Corporate and tech jobs are continuously evolving and providing students the opportunity to design their occupation and have access to advanced training will but a critical part of their path towards advanced employment opportunities in our region. This proposed degree program will allow us to grow and develop talent locally and provide them access to employment opportunities. According the the Jobs Report MTSU and NTC are partnering on every year, middle Tennessee is home to over 62k tech jobs with a growth trajectory of 17% over the next 5 years. The flexibility built into this program will allow students of all age to broaden the career opportunities and refine their skills in their desired occupation, leading them to many opportunities for career growth.

MTSU has been a key stakeholder in the higher-education tech community in Middle Tennessee and at NTC, we believe that with this program, MTSU is well positioned to help Middle Tennessee employers meet their talent demands while helping students advance their careers.

Sincerely yours,

Elise Cambournac
President & CEO
Greater Nashville Technology Council

To: Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC)

Date: July 10, 2023

Subject: Letter of Support for Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) proposed Master of Science in Occupational Innovation and Effectiveness

To whom it may concern:

The Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce is pleased to provide this letter of support for Middle Tennessee State University's (MTSU) proposed Master of Science in Occupational Innovation and Effectiveness.

Reliable access to job training and employment opportunities is one of the many ways talent flourishes in Rutherford County. This proposed degree program will allow us to grow and develop talent locally. The flexibility built into this program broadens its impact it by allowing working adults to choose the focus groups that best apply to their desired career growth. It will be of tremendous benefit to our member companies and the community at large.

MTSU has been a key stakeholder in the higher-education tech community in Middle TN and a strong partner with the Rutherford County Chamber. We believe that this program helps the business community meet their talent demands while helping students advance their careers. It's a win-win for everyone involved.

Sincerely yours,

Paul Latture
President
Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce

Financial Projections Form

Institution	Middle Tennessee State University
Program Name	Master of Science in Occupational Innovation and Effectiveness

Projected One-Time Expenditures

Category	Planning	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Faculty & Instructional Staff	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Non-Instructional Staff	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Graduate Assistants	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Accreditation	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Consultants	$4,000	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Equipment	$2,000	$0	$0	$2,000	$0	0
Information Technology	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Library Resources	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Marketing	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Facilities	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Travel	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Other	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Total One-Time Expenditures	*$6,000*	*$0*	*$0*	*$2,000*	*$0*	*$0*

Projected Recurring Expenditures

Category	Planning	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Faculty & Instructional Staff	$6,000	$8,600	$11,200	$13,800	$16,500	$16,500
Non-Instructional Staff	$0	$0	$0	$72,436	$72,436	$72,436
Graduate Assistants	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Accreditation	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Consultants	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Equipment	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Information Technology	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Library	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Marketing	$3,600	$6,000	$3,000	$3,000	$3,000	$3,600
Facilities	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Travel	$0	$2,000	$2,000	$2,000	$2,000	$2,000
Other	$0	$16,600	$16,600	$9,300	$9,300	$9,300
Total Recurring Expenditures	*$9,600*	*$33,200*	*$32,800*	*$100,536*	*$103,236*	*$103,836*
Grand Total (One-Time and Recurring)	**$15,600**	**$33,200**	**$32,800**	**$102,536**	**$103,236**	**$103,836**

Projected Revenue

Category	Planning	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Tuition	$0	165,627	245,676	302,775	362,118	434,442
Grants	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Other	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Total Revenues	**$0**	**$165,627**	**$245,676**	**$302,775**	**$362,118**	**$434,442**